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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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FBI Phoenix Field Office

30 May 2019

[REDACTED]

**(U//LES) Anti-Government, Identity Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories Very Likely Motivate Some Domestic Extremists to Commit Criminal, Sometimes Violent Activity**

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(U) Domestic extremists employ a number of indicators, some of which may be criminal and others which may constitute the exercise of rights guaranteed by the First Amendment of the US Constitution. The FBI is prohibited from engaging in investigative activity for the sole purpose of monitoring the exercise of constitutional rights.

(U//FOUO) The FBI assesses anti-government, identity based, and fringe political conspiracy theories<sup>a, b</sup> very likely<sup>c</sup> motivate some domestic extremists, wholly or in part, to commit criminal and sometimes violent activity. The FBI further assesses in some cases these conspiracy theories very likely encourage the targeting of specific people, places, and organizations, thereby increasing the likelihood of violence against these targets. These assessments are made with high confidence,<sup>d</sup> based on information from other law enforcement agencies, open source information, court documents, human sources with varying degrees of access and corroboration, and FBI investigations.

(U//FOUO) One key assumption driving these assessments is that certain conspiracy theory narratives tacitly support or legitimize violent action. The FBI also assumes some, but not all individuals or domestic extremists who hold such beliefs will act on them. The FBI assesses these conspiracy theories very likely will emerge, spread, and evolve in the modern information marketplace, occasionally driving both groups and individual extremists to carry out criminal or violent acts. Indicators that may lead to revised judgements or cause a change in the confidence level associated with this assessment include a lack of conspiracy theory-driven criminal or violent activity in the near to long term or significant efforts by major social media companies and websites to remove, regulate, or counter potentially harmful conspiratorial content.

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<sup>a</sup> (U) See Appendix A: Defining Conspiracy Theories.

<sup>b</sup> (U) For an explanation of these terms and a description of all conspiracy theories referenced in this intelligence bulletin, see Appendix B: Prominent Anti-Government, Identity Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories.

<sup>c</sup> (U) See Appendix C: Expressions of Likelihood.

<sup>d</sup> (U) See Appendix D: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information.

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**(U) Source Summary Statement**

(U//FOUO) This intelligence bulletin draws upon a wide body of reporting derived from other law enforcement agencies, open source information, documentary sources, human source reporting with varying degrees of access, and FBI investigations from 15 January 2008 to 30 January 2019. Reporting from other law enforcement agencies and open source information was deemed the most critical in supporting the key analytic judgments in this paper. News articles provided contextual details of various incidents and background on specific conspiracy theories not contained in law enforcement reporting, while academic publications aided in clearly defining the topic, limiting the scope of the paper, and developing the key analytic judgments. Documentary sources consisting of plea agreements, a Court of Appeals Opinion, a criminal complaint, and an indictment provided additional details concerning the incidents discussed, including the charges brought against the perpetrators and, in some cases, the conspiracy theory-based motives of their actions. The use of reporting derived from human sources and FBI investigations was limited, although these sources did provide intelligence that corroborated open source information. Human sources included an established human source with indirect access, much of whose reporting since 2014 has been corroborated, a liaison source with indirect access, a limited history of reporting, and extensive knowledge of domestic extremist groups throughout the United States, and a member of the public with indirect access, reporting for the first time, and whose reliability cannot be determined. The intelligence encompassed within this intelligence bulletin was collected between 1 November 2013 and 30 January 2019 and is current as of 31 January 2019.

**(U//LES) Anti-Government, Identity Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories Very Likely Motivate Some Domestic Extremists to Commit Criminal or Violent Activity**

(U//LES) The FBI assesses anti-government, identity based, and fringe political conspiracy theories very likely motivate some domestic extremists, wholly or in part, to engage in criminal or violent activity. This assessment is based on events in which individuals committed crimes, plotted attacks, or successfully carried out deadly violence and who—either before or after their arrests—attributed their actions to their conspiratorial beliefs. These events include instances in which the perpetrators intended to kill groups identified by such theories as hostile and malevolent, or to simply carry out dangerous, unlawful acts in an effort to draw attention to or expose a perceived conspiracy.

- (U//LES) On 19 December 2018, a California man was arrested after being found in possession of bomb making materials with the intent to construct an explosive device, according to information obtained from a law enforcement agency.<sup>1</sup> According to information obtained from a separate law enforcement agency, the individual stated he planned to travel to Springfield, Illinois and blow up a satanic temple monument at the Illinois Capitol rotunda in order to “make Americans aware of ‘Pizzagate’ and the New World Order (NWO), who were dismantling society.”<sup>2</sup>
- (U//FOUO) On 27 October 2018, an identified individual killed 11 people and injured several others at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, according to a criminal complaint filed in US District Court.<sup>3</sup> According to a copy of his social media postings obtained via open source, shortly before the attack the individual reposted a cartoon depicting the Zionist Occupation Government conspiracy theory and stated that

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the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society “likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can’t sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I’m going in.”<sup>4</sup>

- (U//FOUO) On 15 June 2018, a Nevada man used an armored truck to block traffic on the Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge, held up signs conveying a political demand, then fled into Arizona where he was arrested by Arizona Department of Public Safety, who found body armor, rifles, ammunition, and a flash-bang device inside his vehicle, according to law enforcement information.<sup>5</sup> According to a technical source with direct access, the man referenced the QAnon conspiracy theory directly and discussed related conspiratorial beliefs after his arrest.<sup>6</sup> According to an online news source deemed reliable, he sent letters from jail containing a distinctive QAnon slogan to President Trump and other officials claiming he wanted to expose government corruption and lies.<sup>7</sup>
- (U) On 27 October 2016, two men were arrested in Georgia on drug charges and found to be stockpiling weapons, ammunition, and other tactical gear in preparation to attack the government-funded research facility in Alaska known as the High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP), according to information obtained from another law enforcement agency.<sup>8</sup> According to subject interviews by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), the men became upset after watching videos online about the imposition of martial law and other government conspiracies.<sup>9, 10</sup> One of the men, who claimed the government was using HAARP to control the weather and prevent humans from talking to God, also made references to the United Nations (UN) invading America and sacrifices occurring at a New World Order church, according to the same source.<sup>11</sup>
- (U//FOUO) On 1 November 2013, an identified individual shot and killed one Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officer and wounded several others at Los Angeles International Airport, according to an FBI investigation.<sup>12</sup> Before the attack, the individual wrote a letter expressing his desire to kill TSA personnel, who he associated with the New World Order, according to a plea agreement filed in US District Court.<sup>13</sup>

**(U//LES) Anti-Government, Identity Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories Very Likely Encourage the Targeting of Specific People, Places, and Organizations**

(U//LES) The FBI assesses in some cases anti-government, identity based, and fringe political conspiracy theories very likely encourage the targeting of specific people, places, and organizations, thereby increasing the risk of extremist violence against such targets. This assessment is based on several incidents where individuals threatened, assaulted, or plotted to attack entities they perceived as being linked to or involved with an alleged conspiracy. This targeting occurs when promoters of conspiracy theories, claiming to act as “researchers” or “investigators”, single out people, businesses, or groups which they falsely accuse of being involved in the imagined scheme. These targets are then subjected to harassment campaigns and threats by supporters of the theory, and become vulnerable to violence or other dangerous acts.

- (U//LES) On 29 May 2018, the leader of an unofficial, local veterans aid group claimed to have discovered a child sex trafficking camp on privately owned land in Tucson, Arizona, according to two news sources of unknown reliability.<sup>14, 15</sup> After local law

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enforcement investigations discredited the claim, the leader repeatedly alleged a law enforcement cover up and referenced the QAnon conspiracy theory as he and armed group members searched for additional camps, according to multiple sources with varying degrees of access.<sup>16, 17, 18, 19, 20</sup> In addition, the leader and his supporters accused specific residents, businesses, and local officials of aiding or participating in child sex trafficking, according to two sources with indirect access.<sup>21, 22, 23</sup> The group also harassed, threatened, and doxed critics and opponents, according to multiple sources with varying degrees of access,<sup>24, 25, 26, 27, 28</sup> and engaged in criminal activities, according to an indictment filed in an Arizona county superior court.<sup>29</sup>

- (U) Following the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, conspiracy theorists who believed the shooting was a government hoax harassed and threatened family members of the slain victims, who they believed to be complicit, according to two online news sources deemed reliable.<sup>30, 31</sup> According to an FBI investigation, a Florida woman was arrested and sentenced in 2017 for sending death threats to a victim's father,<sup>32, 33</sup> and a Brooklyn, New York man was arrested in November 2015 after harassing another victim's daughter and fleeing from police, according to an online news source of unknown reliability.<sup>34</sup>
- (U) On 4 December 2016, a North Carolina man was arrested in Washington, DC after he entered the Comet Ping Pong pizza restaurant carrying an AR-15 rifle and a .38 revolver, fired shots at a locked closet door, and aimed his rifle at an employee. The man was motivated by the Pizzagate conspiracy theory, alleging that a child sex-trafficking ring involving nationally known political figures was operating from inside the restaurant, according to a plea agreement filed in US District Court.<sup>35</sup>
- (U) On 10 April 2015, a Tennessee man was arrested for plotting to attack an Islamic community near Hancock, New York known as Islamberg, according to an FBI investigation.<sup>36</sup> According to a US Court of Appeals Opinion, inaccurate news reporting about Islamberg had surfaced in recent years, including a story suggesting the community supported terrorism. The man became obsessed with Islamberg, believing that its residents were plotting to attack New York City, and in February 2015 he began attempts to recruit others to join his attack.<sup>37</sup>

### (U) Perspective

(U) Although conspiracy theory-driven crime and violence is not a new phenomenon, today's information environment has changed the way conspiracy theories develop, spread, and evolve. The advent of the Internet and social media has enabled promoters of conspiracy theories to produce and share greater volumes of material via online platforms that larger audiences of consumers can quickly and easily access.<sup>38, 39</sup> Based on the increased volume and reach of conspiratorial content due to modern communication methods, it is logical to assume that more extremist-minded individuals will be exposed to potentially harmful conspiracy theories, accept ones that are favorable to their views, and possibly carry out criminal or violent actions as a result. The Internet has also enabled a 'crowd-sourcing' effect wherein conspiracy theory followers themselves shape a given theory by presenting information that supplements, expands,

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or localizes its narrative. The examples above demonstrate how crowd-sourced conspiracy theories can influence which entities extremists choose to target. These examples also substantiate concerns expressed by some researchers who believe a rise of conspiracism, fostered in part by the Internet, may be accompanied by a search for scapegoats—those believed to be the conspirators' allies, henchmen, or collaborators.<sup>40</sup>

(U//FOUO) This is the first FBI product examining the threat from conspiracy theory-driven domestic extremists and provides a baseline for future intelligence products.

### **(U) Analysis of Alternatives**

(U//FOUO) The FBI considered the alternative hypothesis that domestic extremists likely turn to violence only as a result of an underlying extremist ideology (such as militia extremism or white racially motivated violent extremism), whereas conspiracy beliefs held by such extremists do not play a role in their mobilization to violence. The FBI deemed this alternative to be less likely because these conspiracy beliefs have motivated, at least in part, several high profile violent acts, or have influenced the perpetrators—to the extent that they attributed their actions to their conspiratorial beliefs before or after their arrests. In addition, academic research indicates conspiracy beliefs are not only prevalent and influential in domestic extremist circles and among those with extreme political views, but often serve to magnify and exacerbate existing extremist sentiments. One indicator that would increase the likelihood of this alternative hypothesis is the absence or decrease in incidents over the long term in which domestic extremists engage in violent acts on the basis of their conspiracy beliefs.

### **(U) Outlook**

(U//FOUO) The FBI assesses anti-government, identity based, and fringe political conspiracy theories very likely will emerge, spread, and evolve in the modern information marketplace over the near term, fostering anti-government sentiment, promoting racial and religious prejudice, increasing political tensions, and occasionally driving both groups and individuals to commit criminal or violent acts. Because some conspiracy theories are highly partisan in nature, political developments, including those surrounding major election cycles such as the 2020 presidential election, likely will impact the direction of these conspiracy theories and the potential activities of extremists who subscribe to them over the long term. Another factor driving the intensity of conspiracy theorizing in the United States, and the subsequent threat from conspiracy-minded extremists, is the uncovering of real conspiracies or cover-ups involving illegal, harmful, or unconstitutional activities by government officials or leading political figures. Indicators that these scenarios are emerging include disrupted plots or successful attacks against popular conspiracy theory targets, such as government facilities, synagogues, mosques, or partisan political figures. Additionally, reports of a sudden rise in threats and unfounded accusations against a given individual or business may indicate impending conspiracy theory-driven crime or violence.

### **(U) Intelligence Requirements**

(U) FBI National Standing Collection Requirements

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- (U//FOUO) USA-TERR-CTD-SR-0711-18
- (U//FOUO) USA-TERR-CTD-SR-0401-16

(U) This intelligence bulletin was prepared by the Phoenix Field Office of the FBI. Comments and queries may be addressed to the Phoenix Field Office Field Intelligence Group at [REDACTED]

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**(U) Appendix A: Defining Conspiracy Theories**

(U) Although many conspiracy theories appear benign or inconsequential, others create serious risks. Throughout history, such conspiracy theories have fueled prejudice, witch-hunts, genocide, and acts of terrorism.<sup>e</sup> In the context of domestic terrorism, extremists often view the activities of alleged conspirators as an existential threat that can only be stopped through drastic, or even violent means. The definitions and notes below are meant to inform discussions within law enforcement as they relate to potentially harmful conspiracy theories and domestic extremism.

(U) A *conspiracy theory* is an attempt to explain events or circumstances as the result of a group of actors working in secret to benefit themselves at the expense of others.<sup>f</sup> Conspiracy theories typically allege wrongdoing by powerful others (for example, public officials, business executives, scientists) or societally marginalized groups (for example, Muslims, Jews), and are most prevalent among individuals with extreme political views.<sup>g</sup> Some conspiracy theories point to weak circumstantial evidence, but ignore stronger evidence that would refute their claims.<sup>h, i</sup> Consequently, they are usually at odds with official or prevailing explanations of events.<sup>j</sup> While a conspiracy theory refers to an allegation that may or may not be true, a *conspiracy* is a true causal chain of events. Real conspiracies involving illegal, antidemocratic, or harmful activities by high-level government officials and political elites have been exposed in the past and it has been argued that such plots have encouraged conspiracism in society.<sup>k</sup>

(U) Relying on the premises that nothing happens by accident, nothing is as it seems, and everything is connected, conspiracy theorists tend to view every bad outcome as the result of an intentional decision by an evil actor, dismiss disconfirming evidence as “fabricated” by the conspirators, and connect a wide range of seemingly unrelated occurrences to suggest a larger plot.<sup>l</sup> Despite sharing key characteristics and at times featuring similar themes and intersecting plots, conspiracy theories vary greatly in their scope. Some are narrowly focused on a particular event or set of events whereas others suggest broad, expansive narratives that link multiple conspiracies in complex ways to portray a group of evil actors working to manipulate society on a global scale.

<sup>e</sup> (U) Journal article; *Advances in Political Psychology*; “Understanding Conspiracy Theories”; 20 March 2019; p. 3; Journal is a peer reviewed academic journal. Author received pre-publication version of article on 30 January 2019.

<sup>f</sup> (U) Book; *American Conspiracy Theories*; 2014; p. 32; The authors are associate professors of political science at the University of Miami.

<sup>g</sup> (U) Journal article; *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, Volume 6, Issue 5; “Political Extremism Predicts Belief in Conspiracy Theories”; 12 January 2015; pp. 570-578; Journal is a peer-reviewed academic journal that covers research in social and personality psychology.

<sup>h</sup> (U) Paper; American Political Science Association Annual Meeting; “The Determinants of Belief in Conspiracy Theories”; 30 August 2012; p. 5; The American Political Science Association is a professional organization of scholars and researchers in the field of political science.

<sup>i</sup> (U) Working paper; George Washington University Program on Extremism; “Conspiracy Theories in the Patriot/Militia Movement”; May 2017; pp. 13-14; The George Washington University Program on Extremism provides analysis on issues related to violent and non-violent extremism.

<sup>j</sup> (U) Journal article; *Diogenes*, Volume 1, Issue 7; “Conspiracy Theories as Stigmatized Knowledge”; 25 October 2016; p. 2; *Diogenes* is a peer reviewed academic journal that publishes papers in the field of philosophy and the humanities.

<sup>k</sup> Book; *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I to 9/11*; 2009; pp. 1-12; The author is a professor of history at the University of California, Davis.

<sup>l</sup> Book; *A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America*; 2003; pp. 3-4, 6; The author is a leading expert on the subject and a professor of political science at Syracuse University.

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### (U) Appendix B: Prominent Anti-Government, Identity Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories

(U) The conspiracy theories referenced in this intelligence bulletin have been categorized as anti-government, identity based, or fringe political because they assert secretive, malevolent acts either by an allegedly hostile and tyrannical federal government, by racial, religious, or social minority groups, or by political opponents.

#### Anti-Government

(U) *NWO*: A group of international elites controls governments, industry, and media organizations, instigates major wars, carries out secret staged events, and manipulates economies with the goal of establishing global rule.<sup>m</sup>

(U) *UN*: The UN is being used by an evil global cabal to erode American sovereignty, strip away individual liberties, and bring foreign troops to American soil in order to replace democracy with global tyranny.<sup>n</sup>

(U) *False Flags*: The official story surrounding a given terrorist attack or mass shooting is a lie; the event was staged or conducted by the government to justify encroachments on civil liberties.<sup>o</sup>

#### Identity Based

(U) *Zionist Occupied Government*: Jewish agents secretly control the governments of Western states and are conspiring to achieve world domination.<sup>p</sup>

(U) *Islamberg*: The small Muslim community near Hancock, New York known as Islamberg is a terrorist training camp; its residents, who pose as peaceful Muslims, are in fact Islamic radicals operating as a terrorist sleeper cell.<sup>q</sup>

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<sup>m</sup> (U) Website; Wikipedia.com; List of Conspiracy Theories; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_conspiracy\\_theories](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_conspiracy_theories); accessed on 26 February 2019; Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia with user generated articles whose reliability cannot be determined.

<sup>n</sup> (U) Working paper; George Washington University Program on Extremism; "Conspiracy Theories in the Patriot/Militia Movement"; May 2017; pp. 9-10; The George Washington University Program on Extremism provides analysis on issues related to violent and non-violent extremism.

<sup>o</sup> (U) Research paper; Demos; "The Power of Unreason: Conspiracy Theories, Extremism, and Counterterrorism"; 29 August 2010; p. 45; Demos is a think-tank based in the United Kingdom with a cross-party political viewpoint.

<sup>p</sup> (U) Website; Wikipedia.com; List of Conspiracy Theories; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_conspiracy\\_theories](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_conspiracy_theories); accessed on 26 February 2019; Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia with user generated articles whose reliability cannot be determined.

<sup>q</sup> (U) Online news article; nytimes.com; "They Created a Muslim Enclave in Upstate N.Y. Then Came the Online Conspiracies."; 28 January 2019; <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/28/nyregion/islamberg-ny-attack-plot.html>; accessed on 25 February 2019; The New York Times is a national daily newspaper.

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**Fringe Political**

(U) *Pizzagate*: High ranking democratic officials are or were involved in a child sex trafficking ring centered at the Comet Ping Pong pizza restaurant in Washington, DC.<sup>r</sup>

(U) *QAnon*: An anonymous government official known as “Q” posts classified information online to reveal a covert effort, led by President Trump, to dismantle a conspiracy involving “deep state” actors and global elites allegedly engaged in an international child sex trafficking ring.<sup>s</sup>

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<sup>r</sup> (U) Online news article; Snopes; “The Roots of ‘Pedophile Ring’ Conspiracy Theories”; 2 September 2018; <https://www.snopes.com/news/2018/09/02/roots-pedophile-ring-conspiracy-theories/>; accessed on 4 January 2019; Snopes is the oldest and largest fact-checking site on the Internet.

<sup>s</sup> (U) Online news article; Snopes; “The Roots of ‘Pedophile Ring’ Conspiracy Theories”; 2 September 2018; <https://www.snopes.com/news/2018/09/02/roots-pedophile-ring-conspiracy-theories/>; accessed on 4 January 2019; Snopes is the oldest and largest fact-checking site on the Internet.

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**(U) Appendix C: Expressions of Likelihood**

(U) Phrases such as “the FBI judges” and “the FBI assesses,” and terms such as “likely” and “probably” convey analytical judgments and assessments. The chart below approximates how expressions of likelihood and probability correlate with percentages of chance. Only terms of likelihood should appear in FBI products; the chart includes terms of probability strictly for comparison, as they sometimes appear in reporting of other government agencies. Furthermore, the FBI does not arrive at judgments through statistical analysis; and will not use terms of probability to convey uncertainty in external FBI intelligence products.

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<i>Terms of Likelihood</i>	<b>Almost No Chance</b>	<b>Very Unlikely</b>	<b>Unlikely</b>	<b>Roughly Even Chance</b>	<b>Likely</b>	<b>Very Likely</b>	<b>Almost Certain(ly)</b>
<i>Terms of Probability</i>	<b>Remote</b>	<b>Highly Improbable</b>	<b>Improbable (Improbably)</b>	<b>Roughly Even Odds</b>	<b>Probable (Probably)</b>	<b>Highly Probable</b>	<b>Nearly Certain</b>
	<b>1-5%</b>	<b>5-20%</b>	<b>20-45%</b>	<b>45-55%</b>	<b>55-80%</b>	<b>80-95%</b>	<b>95-99%</b>

**(U) Appendix D: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information**

(U) Confidence levels reflect the quality and quantity of the source information supporting a judgment. Consequently, the FBI ascribes high, medium, or low levels of confidence to assessments, as follows:

(U) **High confidence** generally indicates the FBI's judgments are based on high quality information from multiple sources. High confidence in a judgment does not imply the assessment is a fact or a certainty; such judgments might be wrong. While additional reporting and information sources may change analytical judgments, such changes are most likely to be refinements and not substantial in nature.

(U) **Medium confidence** generally means the information is credibly sourced and plausible but not of sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a higher level of confidence. Additional reporting or information sources have the potential to increase the FBI's confidence levels or substantively change analytical judgments.

(U) **Low confidence** generally means the information's credibility or plausibility is uncertain, the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences, or the reliability of the sources is questionable. Absent additional reporting or information sources, analytical judgments should be considered preliminary in nature.

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(U) Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> (U//LES) FBI; Case Information; 15 January 2019; 19 December 2018; “(U//LES) The Seaside PD reported they arrested [Name withheld] for possession of materials with intent to make a destructive device. [Name withheld] said he planned to build a bomb and traveling to Springfield, IL to blow up a satanic temple monument being displayed in the Illinois Capitol rotunda”; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; Source is a [Name withheld] assessment containing information from another law enforcement agency.

<sup>2</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 28 December 2018; 19 December 2018; “(U) The Seaside PD reported arresting [Name withheld] for possession of materials with the intent to make a destructive device”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is a [Name withheld] assessment containing information from another law enforcement agency.

<sup>3</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 28 October 2018; 27 October 2018; “[TITLE REDACTED]”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source [Name withheld] is the criminal complaint issued out of the Western District of Pennsylvania.

<sup>4</sup> (U) Website; Archive.today Webpage Capture; [TITLE REDACTED]; 27 October 2018; <https://archive.fo/k63LE>; accessed on 3 January 2019; Source is a text and graphical copy of [Name withheld] social media profile.

<sup>5</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 22 June 2018; 15 June 2018; “[TITLE REDACTED]”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is a [Name withheld] assessment containing incident reports from Arizona Department of Public Safety (AZDPS) and Nevada Highway Patrol.

<sup>6</sup> (U//FOUO) FBI; Case Information; 22 June 2018; 15 June 2018; “[TITLE REDACTED]”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is a [Name withheld] assessment containing a supplemental report by AZDPS with partial transcripts of subject’s jail calls, obtained through subpoena to the Mohave County Jail.

<sup>7</sup> (U) Online news article; Reviewjournal.com; “Suspect in Hoover Dam standoff writes Trump, cites conspiracy in letters”; 13 July 2018; <https://www.reviewjournal.com/crime/courts/suspect-in-hoover-dam-standoff-writes-trump-cites-conspiracy-in-letters/>; accessed on 28 January 2019; The Las Vegas Review-Journal is a major daily newspaper. Reporting in the article is based on statements from the subject’s attorney, court records, and letters written by the subject.

<sup>8</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 16 November 2017; 27 October 2016; “(U) Coffee County Sheriff’s Office Police Report - [Name withheld] (Part 1 of 2)”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is a police report provided by the Coffee County Sheriff’s Office.

<sup>9</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 2 December 2016; 27 September 2016; “(U) Interview of [Name withheld] by ATF”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is an investigative report from the ATF summarizing a custodial interview with [Name withheld].

<sup>10</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 2 December 2016; 27 October 2016; “(U) Interview of [Name withheld] by ATF”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is an investigative report from the ATF summarizing a custodial interview with [Name withheld].

<sup>11</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 2 December 2016; 27 October 2016; “(U) Interview of [Name withheld] by ATF”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is an investigative report from the ATF summarizing a custodial interview with [Name withheld].

<sup>12</sup> (U//FOUO) FBI; Case Information; 2 January 2018; 1 November 2013; “(U//FOUO) Timeline of Events - LAX Terminal 3”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is a timeline of events compiled from multiple sources including surveillance video, telephone call recordings, police radio communications, interviews, and other FBI data.

<sup>13</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 15 September 2016; 1 September 2016; “(U) Guilty plea in captioned case”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is the plea agreement between [Name withheld] and the United States Attorney’s Office for the Central District of California.

<sup>14</sup> (U) Online news article; Tucsonnewsnow.com; “[Name withheld] discovers disturbing abandoned camp in Tucson”; 31 May 2018; [https://www.tucsonnewsnow.com/story/38322543/\[Name-withheld\]-abandoned-camp-tucson/](https://www.tucsonnewsnow.com/story/38322543/[Name-withheld]-abandoned-camp-tucson/); accessed on 4 January 2019; Tucsonnewsnow.com is the official website for KOLD News 13, a local news channel. The article is based on reporting from associates of [Name withheld] with direct access.

<sup>15</sup> (U) Online news article; 12news.com; “VERIFY: Is there a child sex camp in Tucson?”; 8 June 2018; <https://www.12news.com/article/news/local/arizona/verify-is-there-a-child-sex-camp-in-tucson/75-562768168>; accessed on 24 January 2019; 12News.com is the official website for KPNX Channel 12, a television station

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covering Arizona-related news. The article is based on videos from the [Names withheld] page and statements from a Pima County Sheriff's Department spokesperson.

<sup>16</sup> (U) Website; [Name withheld]; 4 June 2018; [https://www.\[Name withheld\].com/TucsonPoliceDepartment/posts/10155545208458531](https://www.[Name withheld].com/TucsonPoliceDepartment/posts/10155545208458531); accessed on 24 January 2019; Source is a social media page associated with the Tucson Police Department.

<sup>17</sup> (U) Online news article; hcn.org; "Conspiracy theories inspire vigilante justice in Tucson"; 12 September 2018; <https://www.hcn.org/issues/50.17/politics-conspiracy-theories-inspire-vigilante-justice-in-tucson>; accessed on 25 January 2019; High Country News is an independent non-profit news media source covering issues facing the Western United States. Reporting in the article is based on statements from local law enforcement employees with direct access, interviews with members of [Name withheld] and with other members of the public with direct access.

<sup>18</sup> (U) Website; [Name withheld]; 17 January 2019; [https://www.\[Names withheld\].status/1086090064323440640](https://www.[Names withheld].status/1086090064323440640); accessed on 25 January 2019; Source is a social media page associated with [Name withheld].

<sup>19</sup> (U) Online news article; Motherboard.vice.com; "#QANON Conspiracy Theorists Are Hunting for 'Child Sex Camps' in the Arizona Desert"; 7 June 2018; [https://www.motherboard.vice.com/en\\_us/article/zm8ww8/qanon-conspiracy-theorists-are-hunting-for-child-sex-camps-in-the-arizona-desert](https://www.motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/zm8ww8/qanon-conspiracy-theorists-are-hunting-for-child-sex-camps-in-the-arizona-desert); accessed on 25 January 2019; Motherboard is a multimedia publication owned by Vice Media and focusing on stories related to technology and science. Reporting in the article is based on statements from a Tucson Police Department representative, other local and national news reporting, and videos and posts from the [Names withheld] page.

<sup>20</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 24 October 2018; 11 August 2018; "[TITLE REDACTED]"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is an officer from another law enforcement agency.

<sup>21</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 6 July 2018; 28 June 2018; "(U) RE: E-Mail regarding [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; Source is a liaison contact with indirect access, whose reporting is limited and some of whose reporting has been corroborated.

<sup>22</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 5 July 2018; 5 July 2018; "(U) Information on [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; Source is a liaison contact with indirect access, whose reporting is limited and some of whose reporting has been corroborated.

<sup>23</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 30 July 2018; 23 July 2018; "[TITLE REDACTED]"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is an established source with indirect access to the information, much of whose reporting has been corroborated.

<sup>24</sup> (U//FOUO) FBI; Case Information; 9 August 2018; 9 August 2018; "(U//FOUO) Threats Made by [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is a screen capture of a comment posted to social media by user [Name withheld].

<sup>25</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 6 July 2018; 23 June 2018; "[TITLED REDACTED]"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; Source is a member of the public with indirect access who shared the information with the Pima County Sheriff's Department.

<sup>26</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 30 July 2018; 15 July 2018; "(U) Conversion to Full Investigation: [Name withheld]; AOT - DT Militia Extremism"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is screen captures of social media posts, online videos, and documents from other websites relating to the dox of local law enforcement officials.

<sup>27</sup> (U//FOUO) FBI; Case Information; 26 September 2018; 20 September 2018; "(U//FOUO) Threats made by [Name withheld] toward FBI"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is a video posted to social media websites containing threats made by [Name withheld] toward the FBI.

<sup>28</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 18 October 2018; 15 October 2018; "[TITLED REDACTED]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; An established source with indirect access to the information, much of whose reporting has been corroborated.

<sup>29</sup> (U//FOUO) FBI; Case Information; 27 September 2018; 19 September 2018; "(U//FOUO) Pima County Superior Court Indictment"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is the Pima County Superior Court Indictment of [Name withheld] and associates for criminal trespass and burglary charges.

<sup>30</sup> (U) Online news article; latimes.com; "In an age of 'alternative facts,' a massacre of schoolchildren is called a hoax"; 3 February 2017; <https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-sandy-hook-conspiracy-20170203-story.html>;

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accessed on 4 January 2019; The Los Angeles Times is a national daily newspaper. Reporting in the article is based on statements from the father of a Sandy Hook victim and a letter to the White House from Newtown residents.

<sup>31</sup> (U) Online news article; TheGuardian.com; "Sandy Hook father [Name withheld] on death threats: "I never imagined I'd have to fight for my child's legacy"; 2 May 2017; <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/may/02/sandy-hook-school-hoax-massacre-conspiracists-victim-father>; accessed on 4 January 2019; TheGuardian.com is a British news and media website. Reporting in the article is based on an interview with the father of a Sandy Hook victim, a letter from the Newtown school board to the White House, and statements from [Names withheld].

<sup>32</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 3 April 2017; 3 April 2017; "(U) Arrest of [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is the arrest warrant for [Name withheld].

<sup>33</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 21 June 2017; 7 June 2017; "(U) Sentencing of [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is an FBI agent who was present at [Name withheld] sentencing hearing in US District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

<sup>34</sup> (U) Online news article; ctpost.com; "Sandy Hook 'truther' gets suspended sentence"; 18 April 2016; <https://www.ctpost.com/policereports/article/Sandy-Hook-truther-gets-suspended-sentence-7255482.php>; accessed on 7 January 2019; Ctpost.com is the official website for The Connecticut Post, a daily newspaper located in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The article is based on proceedings of the superior court in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

<sup>35</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 18 August 2017; 24 March 2017; "(U) Plea Agreement"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is a plea agreement filed in the US District Court for the District of Columbia.

<sup>36</sup> (U) FBI; Case Information; 23 April 2015; 10 April 2015; "(U) Arrest of [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is a copy of [Name withheld] arrest warrant, complaint, and affidavit.

<sup>37</sup> FBI; Case Information; 27 November 2018; 4 October 2018; "(U) United States Court of Appeals Opinion on [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is an Opinion drafted by the Sixth Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals.

<sup>38</sup> (U) Book; *Web of Conspiracy: A Guide to Conspiracy Theory Sites on the Internet*; 2008; p. xi; The authors are former reporters and editors who have published earlier works regarding online news sources, one of whom teaches journalism at New Jersey City University.

<sup>39</sup> (U) Working paper; George Washington University Program on Extremism; "Conspiracy Theories in the Patriot/Militia Movement"; May 2017; p. 15; The George Washington University Program on Extremism provides analysis on issues related to violent and non-violent extremism.

<sup>40</sup> (U) Journal article; Diogenes, Volume 1, Issue 7; "Conspiracy Theories as Stigmatized Knowledge"; 25 October 2016; p. 6; Diogenes is a peer reviewed academic journal that publishes papers in the field of philosophy and the humanities.



# Federal Bureau of Investigation

## Intelligence Products Customer Service Satisfaction Survey

Product Title: Anti-Government, Identity Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories Very Likely Motivate Some Dom

1. (U//FOUO) Please select customer type:  and function:

2. (U//FOUO) Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following:

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A
Product's overall usefulness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product's relevance to your mission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product's timeliness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product's responsiveness to your intelligence needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. (U//FOUO) How do you plan to use this product in support of your mission? (Check all that apply.)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate into one of my own organization's finished information or intelligence products | <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate into training                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Share contents with partners outside my organization                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate into planning and preparedness efforts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Share within my organization  | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not plan to use                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve situational awareness   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:   |

4. (U//FOUO) How does this product add value to your mission? (Please portion mark comments.)

5. (U//FOUO) How could this product be improved? (Please portion mark comments.)

6. (U//FOUO) What is the primary intelligence source you rely on to perform your mission?

To help us understand more about your organization so we can better tailor future products, please provide:

Name: <input type="text"/>	Position: <input type="text"/>
Organization: <input type="text"/>	State: <input type="text"/>
Contact Number: <input type="text"/>	Email: <input type="text"/>

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